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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 001530

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/13/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#) [SNAR](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA DEA ATTACHE PRESSES FOR COORDINATION AT  
WEST AFRICAN JOINT GATHERING

REF: COTONOU 888

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reason 1.4 (D)

1. (U) Participants gave high marks to the fifth annual West African Joint Operations (WAJO) conference held in Cotonou, Benin on September 7 and 8 (reftel).

2. (C) DEA received positive responses from Benin, Ghana, The Gambia and Togo about forming joint task forces between DEA and their representative national drug law enforcement organizations. The joint task force concept will establish a more structured operating relationship between host country forces and DEA. In the mid-1990's, DEA established a joint task force with the Nigerian drug enforcement agency. That task force recorded some modest success but later fell into disuse. We are also in discussions with the NDLEA to revive that original task force. These bilateral arrangements foster closer working relationships and accountability, and also should promote the secure exchange of sensitive operational intelligence.

3. (C) DEA's message to WAJO was clear: resources are available to support operations against significant trafficking targets. Member countries must target major trafficking organizations, with operations in multiple WAJO countries or significant operations in a single country. If credible targets and intelligence are identified, DEA will provide support, including funding, for operations against the target.

4. (C) Comment: Growing participation and attendance at the latest WAJO conference is encouraging, but the organization's success must be measured by tangible results. Much of the discussion at this year's event focused on old cases (one port seizure occurring over twelve years ago). These discussions have some precedential value for coordination and communication between member country law enforcement agencies, but the continued re-hash of old successes does little to ensure current or future achievement. DEA is committed to establishing joint task forces with the abovementioned additional WAJO countries in an attempt to strengthen operational relationships and help members make additional progress. The future success of these efforts will be a key indicator of WAJO's value to us as an operational organization. End comment.  
BROWNE